Statement

The Storage Capacity (owned and hired/covered and Cap), available with the food Corporation of India during the last three years.

(Fig. in '000' tonnes)

Year (as on 31/3)	Covered			Cap (Open)			Grand Total
	Owned	Hired	Total	Owned	Hired	Total	
1995-96	12413.50	8252.35	20665.85	1602.46	4141.94	5744.40	26410.25
1996-97	12422.67	7053.58	19476.25	1493.62	1672.42	3166.04	22642.29
1997-98	12433.43	6726.05	19159.48	1553.35	1656.29	3209.64	22369.12

Delicensing Sugar Import

2822. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Times of India, (Ahmedabad) dated the 28th November, 1998 under the caption, Delicensing imports may cripple State's sugar industry;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether import of sugar under OGL will pose a serious threat to the Gujarat State's sugar industry run by farmers' co-operatives;

(d) whether the National Federation of Sugar Industry in Gujarat has taken up the matter with the Central Government for protection of the interests of the farmers; and

(e) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the news report, it has been mentioned, inter-alia, that the imports of sugar under OGL have posed a serious threat to the State's Sugar Industry and cooperative sector is perturbed over the delicensing of sugar as the big industrial houses could jeopardise the existing network of farmers cooperatives.

(c) No, Sir. Imports of sugar under OGL are unlikely to pose any serious threat to Gujarat's Sugar Industry.

(d) and (e) Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) and National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) have represented to the Government to increase the customs duty on imports of sugar to 50%. The Government has increased the customs duty on import of sugar thrice in the financial year 1998-99. On 28.4.98, Government imposed a basic customs duty of 5% and countervailing duty of Rs. 850/- per tonne on imports of sugar. On 14.1.99, Government increased the customs duty on imports of sugar from 5% to 20%. With the change in customs duty rate structure in the Budget Proposals for the financial year 1999-2000, the customs duty on imports of sugar stands revised to 25% along with Surcharge of 10% with effect from 28.2.99. The countervailing duty of Rs. 850/- per tonne will also continue.

Storage shortage for Kharif Crop

2823. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a serious storage shortage for the coming Kharif crop;